

REMARKS

Page 10 of the Examiner's Answer mailed on August 22, 2003 in connection with the present application objected to claims 17, 21, and 22 as depending from a rejected base claim but indicated that these claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

In this amendment, the Applicants propose to rewrite claim 17 as an independent claim including all the limitations of claim 1 from which it depends, thereby putting it into condition for allowance. The Applicants also propose to amend method claim 8 so as to depend from amended claim 17, and to cancel method claims 18, 23, and 24 as unnecessary. Upon entry of this amendment, all of method claims 8 - 12, 16, and 19 - 22 will depend from amended claim 17 and thus will be in condition for allowance.

The proposed amendments are directly solely to overcoming objections, cancelling claims, and to changing the dependency of claims so to depend from allowed claims, so it raises no new issues. The proposed amendments could not be made earlier because they are responsive to a change in the status of the claims first made in the Examiner's Answer of August 22, 2003, in which the Examiner first indicated that claim 17 contains allowable subject matter. The overall effect of the proposed amendment is to remove issues for appeal. Entry of the proposed amendment is therefore appropriate under MPEP 714.13 and MPEP

1207.

Respectfully submitted,

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